

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 08607 101316Z  
ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T TEHRAN 08607

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E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PEPR, IR  
SUBJ: TIME CORRESPONDENTS' INTERVIEW WITH SHAH

1. STROBE TATBOTT AND DEAN BROLIS, TIME MAGAZINE, HAD AN AUDIENCE WITH THE SHAH ON SEPTEMBER 9 AT 10:30 A.M. THIS MESSAGE, BASED ON EMBOFF'S CONVERSATION WITH THEM, REPORTS MATERIAL WHICH THE SHAH PROVIDED ON AN OFF-THE-RECORD BASIS. THE REMAINDER OF THE INTERVIEW WILL APPEAR IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE OF TIME, WHICH WILL FEATURE A COVER STORY ON THE SHAH AND IRAN.

2. TALBOTT SAID THE SHAH "LOOKED AWFUL," DESCRIBING HIM AS A SHATTERED MAN WHO LOOKED TO BE ON THE BRINK OF A NERVOUS COLLAPSE. HE SAID THE SHAH TOLD THEM THAT PEOPLE CLOSE TO THE THRONE WHOM HE HAS ALWAYS TRUSTED IN THE PAST ARE TELLING HIM THAT THE CIA IS VERY ACTIVE IN THE CURRENT DISTURBANCES, TO THE POINT OF HAVING PENETRATED THE NATIONAL FRONT AT A HIGH LEVEL. HE DID NOT ELABORATE ON WHAT THE CIA'S MOTIVES WOULD BE IN DESTABILIZING HIS REGIME. THE SHAH ALSO REFERRED TO THE "BIG GAME," MUSING THAT PERHAPS THE U.S. HAD CONCEDED IRAN TO THE SOVIET OR "NEUTRAL" SPHERE OF INFLUENCE. HE DID NOT ELABORATE ON EITHER THEME.

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3. THE CORRESPONDENTS ASKED THE SHAH IF HE HAD CONSIDERED LEGALIZING THE TUDEH PARTY. HE REPLIED THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF DOING SO, AS A LEGAL TUDEH PARTY WOULD BE NO MORE THAN A "TROJAN HORSE," LIKE THE HUSAK FORCES IN CZECHOSLAVAKIA HAD BEEN IN 1968, WHICH COULD CONCEIVABLE INVITE THE SOVIETS TO INTERVENE IN

IRAN UNDER THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE.

4. THE CORRESPONDENTS ASKED THE SHAH IF HE WAS CONSIDERING ABDICATION IN FAVOR OF HIS SON. TALBOTT SAID THERE WAS A LONG PAUSE AFTER THIS QUESTION BEFORE THE SHAH REPLIES, "THAT IS A VERY EMBARRASSING QUESTION." AFTER ANOTHER PAUSE HE SAID, "FOR ME TO DO THAT WOULD BE EASY. I WOULD LIKE TO WAVE GOODBYE, BUT .... THAT WOULD BE A CATASTROPHE."

5. TALBOTT REPORTED THAT ALTHOUGH THE SHAH WAS CLEARLY DISAPPOINTED IN HIS COUNTRYMEN'S INABILITY TO COPE WITH THE LIBERALIZATION PROCESS, HE ALSO SHOWED OBVIOUS DISTASTE FOR THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES. WHEN ASKED IF SUCH POLICIES HAD AIDED HIS OPPONENTS, HE SMILED WRYLY AND SAID, "YOU WILL HAVE TO ASK THEM."

6. TALBOTT SAID THE INTERVIEW WAS SO NEGATIVE THAT HE TRIED TO GIVE THE SHAH A CHANCE TO SAY SOMETHING POSITIVE BY NOTING THAT THE FIRST NIGHT OF THE CURFEW HAD APPARENTLY GONE WELL. THE SHAH'S RESPONSE WAS THAT "IT'S TOO EARLY TO TELL."

7. TALBOTT HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO GO TO ANKARA YESTERDAY TO INTERVIEW PREMIER ECEVIT, BUT TIME HAD  
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DECIDED TO RUN THE IRAN STORY AS ITS FEATURE ARTICLE, SO HE STAYED THE EXTRA DAY TO INTERVIEW THE SHAH. HE IS NOW FLYING TO WASHINGTON TO TAKE A WEEK'S REST. BROLIS IS STILL IN TEHRAN, AND WILL BE AT THE HILTON (ROOM 1322) FOR THE NEXT WEEK.  
SULLIVAN

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